

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 6-8 have been canceled.

New claims 14-16 have been added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-5 and 9-16 are now pending in this application.

Drawing Objection

The drawings are objected to for not showing every feature specified in the claims. In particular, the Office argues that not every feature of claims 6 and 7 are shown in the drawings. Claims 6 and 7 have been cancelled. The objection to the drawings is now moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Specification

The specification is objected to as failing to provide antecedent basis for claimed subject matter. In particular, the Office argues that not every feature of claims 6 and 8 regarding a toothed washer have antecedent basis in the specification. Claim 8 does not recite a toothed washer so it appears that the Office intended to refer to claims 6 and 7 instead. Claims 6 and 7 have been canceled. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 2, 3, 5-9, and 11-13 are objected to for containing informalities. The claims have been amended where appropriate. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 6 and 7 have been canceled and the rejection is now moot.

Claims 7-9, 12, and 13 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The claims have been amended where appropriate. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,328,513 (hereafter "Niwa et al."). Claims 1-3, 5, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 10-203288 and Niwa et al. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 0899171 in view of Niwa et al.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 8, which was identified as containing allowable subject matter. Claims 2-5, 9, and 11 depend from claim 1. Claim 10 has been amended to include language similar to claim 8. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-5, 10, and 11 are allowable over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art rejections is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that claims 8, 9, 12, and 13 contain allowable subject matter.

New Claims

New claims 14-16 have been added. Claims 14-16 depend from claim 10 and are allowable over the prior art for at least the reasons discussed. Applicant further submits that claims 14-16 further recite features of a spacer not disclosed or suggested by the prior art.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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